

MEMORANDUM:

TO: Multi-Modal Transportation Task Force
FROM: Active Living for Life (ALL) Physical Activity Committee
DATE: April 8, 2004
RE: Relationship between active living and transportation planning

The Lincoln **Active Living for Life** (ALL) committee is newly created with the purpose to create a healthier Lincoln through the support and promotion of physical activity throughout the lifespan. *Active Living* is a way of life that integrates physical activity into daily routines. The goal is to accumulate at least 30 minutes of activity each day. Individuals may do this in a variety of ways, such as walking or bicycling for transportation, exercise or pleasure; playing in the park; working in the yard; taking the stairs; and using recreational facilities.

ALL commends your work on and attention to the need for more options for active transportation, such as walking and bicycling. We would like to draw attention to the rising health concerns related to physical inactivity :

- 200,000 deaths/year in the US are attributable to physical inactivity
- We have seen an increase in seriously overweight youth.
from 5% in 1963-79 to 14% in 1988-94 in the US
- In Nebraska, approximately 2 in every 3 adults do not engage in a recommended level of physical activity (i.e. moderate or vigorous). NE BRFSS 2001

Research also tells us that about 25 percent of all trips made in the US are less than one mile in length, and 75 percent of those short trips are made by automobile. The number of trips the average American adult takes on foot each year dropped 42 percent between 1975 and 1995. Among children, walking trips dropped 37 percent. It is estimated that only 10 percent of public school students walk to school today, compared with a majority of students a generation ago. The most common means of transportation to school is by car. (US Dept. of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. 1995 Nationwide Personal Transportation Survey. Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Oak Ridge, Tennessee. October 2001. <http://www-cta.ornl.gov/npts/1995/Doc/databook95/contents.pdf>)

The good news is the environment can impact physical activity for good or bad. Factors that influence active living include land use mix, network connectivity, street design, site design, density and community beliefs about crime and safety. According to Jim Sallis, Ph.D., San Diego State University, an average 150 pound person living in an activity-friendly environment could prevent weight gain of 0.85 to 1.75 pounds per year, which approximates the average annual adult weight gain in the US.

We recognize the enormity of your task in developing this plan as there are many factors to consider. We encourage you to consider the health benefits to the community as the result of your successful multi-modal transportation planning and salute your efforts thus far. Your work may very well impact the health of those in Lincoln for many years to come.

For more information, contact: Mike Heyl, 441-3889 or Barb Fraser, 423-3888, ALL Co-chairs